Undergraduate and Graduate Student Travel Policy

When a registered student organization desires to participate in, or sponsors an event that occurs off the campus, and participation requires vehicle use, the University is committed to promoting the safety of all participants. Therefore, the Bowling Green State University student travel policy applies to all registered student organizations as defined by the Bowling Green State University Student Handbook. This policy is in effect whenever members of registered student organizations travel as official or designated representatives of the University, or participate in an organization-sponsored event where the University is officially represented, and which requires travel in a distance greater than 35-miles one-way from Bowling Green or which requires travel outside of the state of Ohio.

A. Registration of the Event

The organization must register each trip by submitting a completed trip registration form for all trip participants.

B. Advisor Participation

Upon review of the registration form, a staff member from the Office of Campus Activities (or designee) will determine if the presence of a travel advisor is required. If a travel advisor is required to travel with the group, the travel costs for the travel advisor will be paid from a special account designated for advisor travel and provided by the Office of Campus Activities. One member of the travel group must serve as the trip coordinator including completion of trip coordinator training as provided by the Office of Campus Activities. The trip coordinator may be either a student, faculty or staff member. Regardless of their status they must complete the required training.

C. Transportation Requirements

Bowling Green State University has established transportation requirements as determined by the Office of Risk Management. All of these related policies can be found on the Risk Management Web page (http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/riskmgmt/index.html). Additionally, all travel participants are required to follow the transportation requirements summarized below as set forth by the Office of Risk Management. Compliance with these items is required. These transportation requirements apply to travel by car or minivan but do not apply to travel by air or charter bus.

1. Driver Requirements
   - Drivers must obey all traffic laws including seat-belt use. If failure to obey traffic laws results in a ticket, the driver is responsible for any fines including parking tickets.
   - The University is not responsible for loss or damage to personal belongings of employees or students inside vehicles.
2. Rental Vehicles
   - Drivers of Rental Vehicles only do NOT need to be approved by Risk management to drive rental vehicles.
   - Renting vehicles from University-approved rental car vendors is an accepted practice.
   - Drivers must be at least 21 years of age when renting a vehicle using the BGSU Enterprise corporate contract.

3. University Owned Vehicles
   - Drivers of University-Owned vehicles MUST be approved by Risk Management before operating vehicles.
   - Only licensed drivers who are at least 18 years of age may drive a car or minivan.
   - Operation of a University owned vehicle with more than 8 seats is prohibited for student organizations.

4. Personal Vehicles
   - Drivers of personal vehicles for university business do NOT need to be approved drivers with Risk Management to drive.
   - The use of personal vehicles is strongly discouraged because the institution lacks control over the condition, maintenance, and insurance coverage on personal vehicles.
   - Only licensed drivers who are at least 18 years of age may drive a car or minivan.

5. Large Passenger Vans
   - Because large passenger vans pose a special risk, students are prohibited from driving or riding in a vehicle with more than eight seats unless permission is granted by the Dean of Students (or designee).
   - Those designed to carry 8 or more passengers must complete the Van Driver Safety training program ONE TIME to become approved to drive passenger vans. To register for the training, complete the Driving Application for BGSU employees, students, or non-employees.
   - Drivers of rented passenger vans must be at least 21 years of age.

6. Insurance
   - When using University owned or rented vehicles, the University provides all necessary liability and physical damage coverage. Renting a vehicle using the BGSU Enterprise corporate contract, renters may DECLINE the optional insurance as it is included in the negotiated rental rate.
   - Renting from any other rental company, renters should ACCEPT the optional collision and liability insurance.
   - Personal vehicle owners are expected to carry automobile liability insurance in an amount sufficient to cover any property damage or liability loss and be responsible for the payment of their own deductible including the defense of any claim. The University is unable to reimburse the vehicle owner for any accident-related repairs or payment of deductibles.
D. Driving Requirements
1. Travel routes must be planned in advance.
2. Two University-approved drivers are required on trips greater than 250 miles one-way.
3. On long trips (over 250 miles one-way) drivers must rotate every three hours and no one person may drive more than eight hours in a 24-hour period.
4. Drivers are responsible for knowing and following all motor vehicle laws and safety regulations for each state in which travel occurs.
5. The use of a cell phone, including text messaging, is prohibited for drivers while driving. This also includes not using hands-free devices.
6. The number of passengers may not exceed the number of available seat-belts.
7. Transporting minors unless accompanied by a parent or guardian is prohibited except in situations when the minor is a registered BGSU student younger than age 18.
8. If drivers are participating in events and driving on the same day, then drivers should rotate on a more frequent basis to avoid fatigue.
9. Driver fatigue is greater between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. Drivers must use extreme caution when operating a vehicle during this time. A second person should remain awake and ride in the front passenger seat.

E. Inclement Weather
1. When planning the travel route, check the forecast to see if inclement weather is predicted.
2. During inclement weather, travel safety should follow guidelines set forth by the National Weather Service. Drivers should contact local law enforcement and the BGSU Police Department to determine the best course of action based on driving conditions.
3. During inclement weather drivers are to use extreme caution.
4. When driving in treacherous weather and conditions are deemed dangerous or unsafe, immediately cease all travel and find the nearest shelter or hotel.
5. The University will defray the cost of an overnight stay if unexpected bad weather impedes the safe return to campus. Permission to seek extended stays due to weather conditions must be approved by the BGSU Police Department or the Office of Campus Activities.

F. Behavioral Expectations
1. All participants who are defined as BGSU students are accountable to the BGSU Code of Student Conduct throughout the duration of the trip.
2. Being under the influence, or in possession of alcohol or drugs in conjunction with the trip, and throughout its duration, is prohibited regardless of the age of the student participant. This applies from the moment of departure from campus until the
return to campus, or at the moment the student participant disaffiliates from the approved travel arrangements in accordance with the policies established by the Office of Campus Activities.

3. If the driver becomes aware of alcohol and/or drug consumption and/or possession, the driver should stop the vehicle and request that these substances be removed from the vehicle before the trip is continued. Failure of any passenger(s) to comply will cause immediate cancellation of the trip. Individuals as well as the student organization will be held accountable to the policies set forth in the BGSU Code of Student Conduct.

4. Smoking is prohibited inside any University owned or rented vehicle.

5. The transport of hitchhikers or any unauthorized passengers is prohibited.

6. Use of other than a compact-size trailer is prohibited without consent of the Office of Campus Activities (or designee).

7. Students are encouraged to report reckless or irresponsible driving by other student participants so that appropriate safety measures can be taken for future trips.

8. Driving in a foreign country poses extraordinary risks that may necessitate the purchase of special insurance. It is important to consult with the Office of Campus Activities prior to traveling in a vehicle that crosses the border into another country outside the United States.

9. All trip participants are ambassadors of Bowling Green State University and as such must represent the University in a positive light. Alleged violations of the BGSU Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for investigation and resolution. BGSU students and the sponsoring organization are responsible for the behavior of non-BGSU students participating in the trip.

G. In Case of Emergency
In case of emergency refer to Travel and Activities Guide and contact the BGSU Police Department at 419.372.2346

H. Monetary Guidelines
Any person or organization using University funds for travel must comply with the expenditure guidelines established by the Bowling Green State University Division of Finance and Administration.

I. Exemptions
Requests for exemptions to any of the aforementioned policies are subject to approval by the Dean of Students (or designee).
**What is a Trip Coordinator?**

- A Trip Coordinator is an individual trained by the Office of Campus Activities for the purpose of overseeing student organization travel.
- They are the main contact person for both trip participants and University staff regarding the trip.

**What are my duties as Trip Coordinator?**

- The Trip Coordinator often handles the trip registration process.
- Trip Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that BGSU travel policy and code of conduct are followed.
- They are prepared to respond to unforeseen and emergency situations and communicate with necessary individuals or University offices.
- Responsible for disseminating information to trip participants, providers of transportation, activity venues, and accommodations.
  - Information should include trip details, participant lists, emergency contacts, potential risks, and expectations of trip participants.
- Trip Coordinators must respect and ensure confidentiality of Medical and Liability Waivers and other sensitive information in accordance with state and federal law.
- Trip Coordinators maintain travel registration paperwork ([http://www.bgsu.edu/getinvolved/orgs](http://www.bgsu.edu/getinvolved/orgs)) during trip including:
  - Travel & Activities Guide (Travel Binder)
  - Trip Registration
  - Medical and Driver Liability forms
  - Contracts and itineraries
  - Receipts, invoices, and other financial papers related to trip
- Trip Coordinators should be fully aware of the BGSU Travel Policy and communicate appropriate information to trip participants and drivers.
- Should know the BGSU Code of Conduct as well as any local, state, and federal laws must be followed during the course of the trip.
Travel Registration Process

1. Trip Coordinator fills out travel registration form and participant list.

2. Registration form is **submitted to OCA at least 2 weeks prior to travel.** Failure to do so could result in Student Conduct referral.
   - Medical and liability forms for participants traveling are submitted.
   - All medical and liability forms are stored in electronic formats in the Trip Coordinator Portal on OrgSync. These forms are shared electronically with the BGSU Police Department in case of emergency.

3. OCA reviews travel registration and determines whether an advisor is required to accompany the students on the trip. The student organization is notified if the trip is approved and/or if there are any issues with the travel plans or registration.
   - If an advisor **is** required to attend the trip, OCA will cover the expenses incurred for that advisor’s travel.
   - If an advisor **is not** required to attend the trip, a student Trip Coordinator trained by OCA must participate in the trip and will be the primary contact / responsible party regarding the trip.

4. OCA staff enters the trip registration into the online tracking system. The trip details and roster are available to BGSU administrators via a secure website.

5. Approximately 48 hours prior to the trip, OCA staff assembles a travel binder including student liability forms. The Trip Coordinators are notified that they can check the binder out from the OCA office.

6. Student checks binder out from the OCA office **24 hours before travel.**

7. At the completion of the trip, the Trip Coordinator returns the travel binder to the OCA office **within 48 hours.** Any non-emergency incidents such as discipline violations, minor injuries, etc. are to be reported to OCA and the organization advisor immediately on return.

   **Travel & Activities Guide (Travel Binder)**
   - Contains information about travel process, useful trips about relevant methods of travel, emergency response quick-guides.
   - Holds trip related paperwork including registration, medical, and driver forms.
   - Should be picked up from OCA 24 hours prior to trip and returned 48 hours following trip.